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SUBJECT: NORTHERN UGANDA: LRA LEADER ELUSIVE, ATTACKS IN DRC

REF: KAMPALA 1310

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) leader Joseph Kony did not show up for another meeting that he requested with northern Ugandan religious and traditional leaders on September 17. The Ugandan Government was not surprised at the turn of events. Given that Kony often reaches out to northern traditional leaders for help when he is in trouble, Ugandan officials believe that his call to the Acholi Paramount Chief, Rwot Acana, was the result of increased military pressure on the LRA in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). There were reports of increased Congolese military and U.N. Mission to Congo (MONUC) activities in the area around Dungu, where LRA attacks occurred on September 4-5. Kony continues to maintain that the International Criminal Court (ICC) warrants be removed before he signs the Final Peace Agreement (FPA). Kony's latest failure to attend a meeting that he requested and the continued LRA attacks in DRC have convinced even the most sympathetic of northerners that he has no intention of signing a peace deal. End Summary.

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CONGOLESE VILLAGERS RETALIATE AGAINST LRA IN DRC  
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¶2. (SBU) On September 4 and 5, ten LRA members ambushed and kidnapped a group of 16 Congolese villagers on their way to a market along the Dungu/Firaz/Isoro Road, according to MONUC. The villagers were from Dimba. The LRA members raped the women, one of whom was the wife of the village chief. The villagers, armed with bows and arrows, went after the ten LRA perpetrators. The LRA shot and killed two villagers and wounded three. The villagers caught and lynched two of the LRA. The others escaped and ran back to Kony's camp and informed him about the retaliation by the local residents. The chiefs of neighboring villages reportedly alerted Congolese military units which were deployed in the area. In addition, MONUC began moving around in the area on/about September 7 and 8. Kony allegedly has become concerned about recent local press reports about the augmentation of MONUC at Dungu.

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ANOTHER KONY NO-SHOW ANGERS NORTHERN LEADERS  
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¶3. (SBU) Kony called the Acholi Paramount Chief, Rwot Acana, and other former LRA delegation members on September 11. Santa Okot, a former LRA delegation leader, who was in on the conference call, told P/E Chief that Kony was "frantic" and kept them on the line for two hours. Kony told Acana that he wanted a meeting with the northern leaders as soon as possible. As a result, several excited leaders convinced Warner Ten Kate, the director of the U.N. Special Envoy for LRA-Affected Areas office in Kampala, to go to Juba for onward travel to Rikwangba and a meeting with Kony. The group arrived in Juba on September 17 to see Government of Southern Sudan mediator Riek Machar in order to make arrangements to meet Kony. However, as soon as the group arrived in Juba, the entire LRA leadership became unreachable, switching off all of their satellite telephones.

¶4. (SBU) The northern leaders were disappointed that Kony did not show up and had cut off all communications. Kony's actions also dampened the hopes of some of his back-channel contacts, with whom DCM and Deputy USAID Director met with on September 22 in Gulu. Meanwhile, Kony has remained consistent in his position that he will not/not lay down his arms until the International Criminal Court (ICC) warrants are lifted. Kony's chief negotiator, David Matsanga, who also went to Juba, said that Kony wants documentation that the warrants are lifted before coming in from the bush.

¶5. (SBU) Machar and the northern leaders took the opportunity to "meet" about "general issues surround the signing of the FPA." Machar then released a face-saving communique stating that the FPA must be signed as soon as possible as it is. Any clarifications could be worked out through the mechanisms in the FPA. He suggested that a team of fifteen people drawn from the conflict-affected areas led by Acana be facilitated -- by donors -- in the future if needed. (Note: Machar continues to seek funds from Kampala-based donors, who have informed him that funds will only be available on a case-by-case basis. U.N. Envoy Chissano stated that Kony must show up in Rikwangba before his requests for a meeting would be taken seriously. End note.)

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MORE LRA ATTACKS IN DRC, SOUTHERN SUDAN  
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¶6. (SBU) There were several additional LRA attacks and abductions in Kiliwe, Duru, and Dungu, DRC, between September 17 and 20, according to press reports. Up to 90 school children were abducted from the Duru Institute and Kiliwa Primary School and a local chief

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and his son were killed. Minister of Internal Affairs Ruhakana Rugunda said that eight Congolese were killed in the attacks. Catholic missionaries report that the LRA looted, abducted, and burned down buildings. MONUC confirmed the attacks and both MONUC and the Congolese military reportedly began deploying in the area. Public demonstrations in Dungu have put pressure on the Government of DRC to take action against the LRA. During the same time period, approximately 100 LRA attacked a Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army (SPLA) base at Sakure, southern Sudan, killing one soldier and mutilating four children. Uganda military forces are on alert to protect the Ugandan border, according to UPDF Spokesman Major Paddy Ankunda.

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COMMENT  
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¶7. (SBU) Kony's actions continue to demonstrate that he is not interested in a peaceful resolution to the northern Ugandan conflict. His failure to sign the FPA and attacks on Congolese villages contradict the terms set by the Congolese Government for the LRA to remain in Garamba National Park during negotiations, which included an understanding that the LRA would not disturb local populations. Ugandan officials hope that recent LRA activities will convince Sudan and DRC to take joint action against the LRA.

HOOVER